



For Immediate Release

Feb. 27, 2011

Release #. 110227-01

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(CTZ Public Affairs)

ANA Marks Historic Moment with Transition Ceremony.

ZABUL, Afghanistan- Sunday, Feb. 27 marked a historic moment not only for the 2nd Kandak, 2nd Brigade, 205th Corps of the Afghan National Army but also the Afghan National Security Forces. On this day, the 2nd Kandak celebrated a goal never reached by any other ANA unit in Afghanistan to date. It is the first Kandak to earn and become a completely independent force, capable of operating without the aid of Coalition partners. The historic event was marked with a transition ceremony held at Camp Eagle in Qalat.

Being assessed as independent by Coalition forces and the Ministry of Defense means that 2nd Kandak is able to gather intelligence, plan and execute counter insurgency operations without any assistance. Independence doesn't mean that NATO forces aren't there to assist with air assests and quick reactionary forces when necessary. There are other Kandaks or battalions in 2nd Brigade that are almost ready for this honor, but they need to be assessed and evaluated a little more. This is the first step of many on the eve of the transition plan announcement around mid-March.

On hand to witness the historic event were the Afghan leaders from the 2nd Brigade, 205th Corps, the Ministry of Defense, other influential leaders of Zabul Province and ISAF Forces.

Lt. Gen. David M. Rodriguez, International Security Assistance Force Joint Command Commander, and U.S. Forces – Afghanistan Deputy Commander commended the 2nd Kandak's soldiers and praised their Commander, Lt. Col. Wali Mohammad.

"Today we recognize the 2nd Kandak's ability to plan, execute and sustain its operations without assistance from Coalition forces," Rodriguez said. "Lt. Col. Mohammed, your transition to independent status is an important achievement for your soldiers, the Afghan Army and all the people of Afghanistan."

"Today's achievement is possible because your soldiers are proficient in their soldier skills and the 2nd Kandak can shoot move and communicate as a team because each soldier does his job well," he said. "Your achievement here is also important to the Afghan National Army," Rodriguez continued. "The 2nd Kandak is the example to other soldiers, leaders and the entire Ministry of Defense of what is possible; a professional, accountable Afghan National Army," he said.

Col. James Blackburn the 75th Colonel of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, whose soldiers have been working alongside the 2nd Kandak as part of Combined Team Zabul, was equally proud of the unit's extraordinary achievement.

"While we use numbers to describe the success of 2nd Brigade and 2nd Kandak, none of them add up to the effect of this organization," he continued. "The number of IEDs defeated, of caches exploited, the number of enemies detained does nothing to describe what this Brigade means to the people of Zabul."

The transition of 2nd Kandak to the status of a completely independent force is a crucial turning point in the ANA's continuing mission to achieve security and stability throughout Afghanistan. Their

achievement is a shining beacon for other ANSF units to follow. It is a stepping stone towards the ultimate goal of all members of the Afghan government, achieving a safe and stable homeland for the Afghan people.

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Caption

Photo: **Congratulations** : Col. James Blackburn, 2nd Stryker Cavalry regiment Commander addresses the Soldiers of the 2nd Kandak, 2nd Brigade, and 205th Corp during the transition ceremony held Sunday, Feb, 27 at Camp Eagle. (Photo by Sgt. Jerry Wilson)



Caption

Photo: **Changes:**

Maj. Gen. Jamaludin the 2/205 Afghan National
Army Brigade Commander passes the guidon to
signify the 2nd Kandak's transition to independence.

(Photo by Sgt. Jerry Wilson)

